

**Connecticut Emergency Medical Services Primary Service Area Task Force  
Minutes**

**Meeting: Monday, October 28, 2013 at 3:30pm**

**Connecticut Department of Public Health  
OCHA Hearing Room, 410 Capitol Avenue, Hartford**

**Task Force Committee Members Present:**

Caroline Calderone Baisley, Raphael Barishansky, Bruce Baxter, Joseph Danao, Paul Fitzgerald, Mary-Ellen Harper, Vincent Landisio, David Lowell, Seth Roberts, Thomas Ronalter, Carl Schiessl, Charlee Tufts, Gary Wiemokly

**Guests in Attendance:**

Gregory Allard, Charles Babson, James Brown, Rep. Michael Demicco, Michael Donohue, Wendy Furniss, Josh Hughes, Rep. Susan Johnson, Jill Kentfield, Elizabeth Keyes, Ken Przybysz, John Quinlavin, Judith Reynolds, Jim Sandler, Brian Sullivan, Chelsey Worth

**1. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 3:39PM by co-Chair Raphael Barishansky.

**A/B: Introductions (Roll Call of Members/Audience):**

Harper requested and received a motion (Ronalter / Landisio) to add Representative Susan Johnson, Co-Chair of the Connecticut General Assembly Public Health Committee, to the agenda. The motion was unanimously approved. Harper introduced Representative Johnson. Representative Johnson gave a brief overview of her vision for the PSA Task Force, including establishing standardized bylaws and contracts. She spoke to the variety of relationships between EMS Providers and Municipalities, and her desire to have everyone on the same page moving forward. Representative Johnson stated that Senator Gerratana, the Co-Chair of the Public Health Committee, shared this vision. Harper asked Representative Johnson to speak to what will happen with the PSA Task Force's Final Report after it is submitted to the General Assembly. Johnson explained that the report will be reviewed by the Public Health Committee. This may be followed by public hearings on the findings, and could result in changes to the regulations.

Barishansky began the meeting with Task Force Member introductions, followed by the introduction of guests and observers.

**C. Approval of Minutes:**

Motion (Wiemokly, Baxter) was made to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2013 meeting. Motion was unanimously approved.

**D. Public Comment:**

Gary O'Connor (AMR) commented briefly on the need to understand the current system as the Task Force moves forward, including unintended consequences that may result if changes are made. He stated that Connecticut provides quality EMS service that is cost efficient, in comparison to other states. He believes that there is a lot of work to be done prior to drawing conclusions. He thanked everyone for serving on the Task Force.

**2. Old Business:**

**A. Two-Tier Proposal (Mary-Ellen Harper):**

Harper commented that the Two-Tier Proposal had been presented to begin discussion. Ronalter agreed adding it was a good starting point. Landisio stated that the current system is broken and that it needs to be fixed and that the

municipalities need to have a say in the process as stakeholders. He feels that the Two-Tier Proposal needs work, but is a good start.

Baxter stated the proposal could be viewed as a wholesale change and he feels the charge of the Task Force is to enhance the present system. The proposal represents drastic change, but has points that he believes are worth exploring. He is concerned with changes resulting in imbalance of the various components that make up EMS in Connecticut. There are services with significant capital invested, and it could take years to make changes. He agrees changes need to be made, but an incremental approach would be more responsible in his opinion.

Lowell stated he does not feel the group has done due diligence to identify what needs to be addressed. There are groups in the state that are not represented, and they need to be considered. He feels the group needs to identify concerns, look at best practices from other states, and survey communities for their input. He is concerned that many communities are not engaged with their EMS providers.

Baisley commented she has reviewed the packet of material from other states and the proposed regulations. She is concerned that some municipalities may not want the same level of involvement as others. She agrees that the group needs to identify and understand their charge. Ronalter stated the changes would allow municipalities input if they want it. Baxter questioned if those concerns could be addressed through the contracts identified in the EMS Plans, he gave an overview of the New Britain contract, and noted that he has reviewed other contracts which contain similar language. He questioned if we need to change the system entirely, or could accomplish objectives through written contractual agreements.

Tufts commented on the need to concentrate on performance standards and contractual agreements. There needs to be an educational process on the agreements. The right thing must be done for the patients.

Motion (Lowell/Danao) to table the Two-Tier Proposal for future reference. Ronalter commented that maybe the focus should be on petitioning for changes and/or removal of a provider so a municipality has additional options. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **B. Document Review (David Lowell):**

Lowell commented that the documents he distributed were to be used a reference and/or templates, and they are self-explanatory. He feels that throughout the state there are inconsistent performance standards. Harper noted that every community is different and there is no one solution that will work for everyone. Fitzgerald commented on the lack of knowledge that communities have about each other's performance standards.

Barishansky would like to see municipalities more involved, and interacting more regularly with their EMS providers.

Wiemokly said that there is a need to keep the patient the focus. There is no one solution that fits all communities; they should be able to choose what fits their budgets and what is right for them. Municipalities need to work in concert with their medical oversight to determine what the needs of their community are for their patient population.

Barishansky stated that the PSA Assignment establishes the floor level for performance measures.

Baxter addressed revenue and the offset of emergency care service costs by non-emergency service revenue. He noted that not all services have that option.

#### **C. Discussion of legal question raised by Bruce Baxter:**

Barishansky read the answers to the questions submitted to him by Baxter. Barishansky reported to the group that there were no other statutes found that speak to EMS delivery and that the legal opinion of DPH is that the "specific governs the general" and that, in this case, the specific statutes and regulations that govern EMS are those that are the most binding.

**D. Discussion of DPH list of PSA holders requested by Paul Fitzgerald:**

Barishansky explained to the group that OEMS is conducting a detailed audit of all PSA Assignments, which should be completed by this weekend. He wants to assure the accuracy of the list prior to releasing it.

**3. New Business**

**A. Task Force Project Timeline (Raphael Barishansky/Mary-Ellen Harper):**

There was discussion on the importance of completion of the tasks on the proposed schedule in order to accomplish the Task Force's charge in advance of the required deadline.

**B. Alternative approach to PSAR enhancements for further consideration and discussion (Bruce Baxter):**

Baxter reviewed the highlights of the document. The group agreed to accept the document as a reference resource.

**C. Performance Metrics (Bruce Baxter/Charlee Tufts):**

Tufts distributed copies of the Performance Metrics document for the group to review. She requested it be added to the next meeting agenda.

**D & E. Review of PSA Statutes and Regulations & OLR Report (Joseph Danao):**

Danao gave a brief overview of the documents. Due to the length and detail of the documents, Barishansky asked the group to please review them and come back to the next meeting with comments. Danao was thanked for his work on both documents.

Harper suggested the group complete a SWOT analysis and forward their results to Raphael prior to the next meeting. After discussion, it was decided that Harper would develop a template to facilitate the SWOT analysis of the documents and send it out to the group. Comments will be sent to Barishansky.

**F. Task Force Topic Review (Facilitated by Raphael Barishansky & Mary-Ellen Harper):**

In the interest of time, this item will be included in the next agenda packet. The document will summarize the information that the Task Force has reviewed to date.

**4. Adjournment:**

**A. Proposal to Change the Date of the Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be held on November 4, 2013, in the OCHA Hearing Room, 410 Capitol Avenue, Hartford.

Tufts asked if an earlier meeting time would be acceptable to the group, the consensus of the group was to change the meeting time to 2:30PM for all future meetings.

**Adjournment:**

Motion (Harper/Landisio) to adjourn the meeting was made at 4:56PM, approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted:

Judi Reynolds  
DPH/OEMS  
Region 2 Coordinator